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Class of 1968 Five Year Report Alumni Comments

University of Michigan Law School

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COMMENTS

Item VII-A not completed, as the courses offered in 65-68 were more than sufficient had I taken the proper ones or had schedules been slightly different.

I think there should be more of an emphasis on practical subject matter in law school, but not to the exclusion of the theoretical. All "bread and butter" courses would not impart the respect for the theory and history of the law which I think is necessary to make us attorneys and not just form copiers.

I would hope that courses could be developed that emphasize research, writing and advocacy skills.

I think that a better analysis of course structure could be devised to inquire into changes that might be made with respect to existing courses. For example, there are few courses more important for a trial lawyer than Evidence. However, the course as it was devised when I was in law school made no attempt to explain or indicate how the materials could be actually used. This would not be difficult to do. The same analysis applies to Civil Procedure (writing complaints) and other courses. Yet no inquiry is made with respect to this problem on this form. Question VII seems worthless.

Question I was difficult to answer. I regard my practice as metropolitan rather than suburban in nature. Oakland County, where my office is, is over 1,000,000 people; had I considered "Bloomfield Hills" as the city in which I work I would have checked box 2 instead of 6.

When I was at the law school I felt peer pressure toward the "big firm" lifestyle. I'm glad I escaped it; it wouldn't have been for me. I think it would be well if the law school milieu reflected the vast diversity of options open to graduates within private practice; there are lots of things to do besides being a glorified research clerk and bag boy in the first five years out of law school. For example how many of the faculty members who have been in private practice at all ever practiced solo, or participated in starting a law firm?

I spent two years after law school in work in the educational union field that was substantially non-legal. It has served me well, but I think I would have brought more to my legal training had the order been reversed. My one suggestion for curriculum development would be to expand the clinical approach in some way into more traditional fields. It might be nice if one who took commercial transactions invested some time in finding out how a bank works, and how these problems of commercial law come up in a day to day fashion. The same would apply to labor law and to labor law and unions etc.

I believe it is important for students to have as much practical experience as is possible, maybe even an intern-type approach as used by doctors. From my experience and in viewing the associates in our firm, there has been a lack of knowledge of how a law office runs, what lawyers actually do on a day to day basis, and practical court room and non-court room activities, such as real estate, closings and client conferences.

The law school has always done a fine job of preparing students for large law firms or corporate practice. In my opinion it has done too little for the many students who do not want to go this route. Times are changing, and many new and exciting opportunities are available for lawyers. More courses should be offered which would provide training and knowledge to those who wish to practice public interest law, legal services law, civil rights law and other developing areas. Clinical and trial practice training should be expanded considerably so that upon graduation, a student has some idea of how to actually practice law. A student should not have to join a big firm for 2 or 3 years to learn how to practice law.

This questionnaire fails to recognize practice in the area of legal services or public interest - thereby reflecting rather accurately my law school experience.

Legal Writing & Advocacy programs are hopelessly unrelated to conditions of actual practice.

The best courses are those taught by the best teachers, i.e. it's not what you take; it's whom you take it from.

I believe that the course structure of law schools should be more integrated after the first three semesters. For example: rather than have "courses" in corporations, corporate taxation, & securities, there should be integrated problem oriented courses perhaps called business planning I, II, III, IV, etc. where all of these subject areas are merged and directed toward practical application. I found my work at Georgetown more meaningful than the Michigan experience because of this approach. Too much of the case method at Michigan to learn the law! I firmly believe that more law can be learned and retained when a problem oriented approach is employed.

I & II poorly structured. I live in "4" of 7,000, but commute to Chicago daily, "grew up" in town a little larger nearby, before that, in Chicago where I was "raised? Doubt my situation atypical.

I don't think the questionnaire will tell enough about the sorts of public interest careers being pursued - e.g. litigation, lobbying, research; is government work on civil rights, tax, etc?

Law degree is only thing of practical value derived from law school. Without it, no job. All required skills are acquired through on the job training.

027 - As with many questionnaires of this sort, the questions seem unduly restrictive - especially for the anomelous graduates, such as I, who haven't gone into the practice of law. But then, I'm sure you know better than I do what data you need.

I deal with a variety of lawyers each day in trial and negotiations. What Michigan seem to give is a good basic academic foundation, but many schools probably cover the same academic areas as we do at Michigan. However, Michigan teaches a thoroughness in analysis, a perfectionism in legal work that other attorneys often appear to have no conception of. Perhaps it's the old saw that law school teaches more a method than it teaches the law itself.

Martha Cook was a real mother.

1. Justice Berger's comments re. trial practice are extremely valid. The law schools' role in meeting this situation may be questionable however, since a lawyer doesn't really know if he'd like to specialize in trial work until 2 or 3 years of practice.

2. Far too many attorneys of marginal competence, at best, are being admitted to practice. I hope this criticism does not apply as strongly to U.M Law School as to some others; the State Bar Associations are going to have to tighten up somewhere. The public won't stand for it much longer.

Times have probably changed but one of the great disappointments to me as I look back at my classmates and look over at my fellow lawyers is how incredibly rigid, dogmatic, and limited in vision they are. Lawyers are too much the perpetuators of the old order and I know you are somewhat limited by the material you get, but lawyers should get a healthy shot in law school of questioning what the law seeks to do, what it should do, and how it measures up. We should be more than a trade school.

Real problems encountered while employed as a lawyer are definitely more interesting than cases in case books. I wonder from time to time whether my career pattern would have been substantially different if I had been able to acquire legal training as an apprentice to practioners rather than as a student in law school. Perhaps I just don't enjoy competing with many others for coveted rewards. I certainly did not enjoy the extremely competitive environment of law school. The competitive reality in my view inhibited my learning ability. But my point goes much further. Real life business and financial problems are exciting to me now. They definitely were not while I was attending law school.

By and large I felt that the law school provided an excellent opportunity to obtain a broadly based theoretical legal education. I do feel, however, that certain professors spent an excessive amount of time on areas of interest to them and devoted inadequate time to equally relevant areas which their course supposedly covered. There were few, if any, opportunities

to learn anything about the practical side of practice in such areas as the psychology of negotiations, client relations, office management.

I agree with the principle expressed recently by Chief Justice Berger about specialized training and practice in the litigation area. I am very interested in receiving a copy of the survey. Many thanks.

I think the questionnaire is too limited. It seeks information primarily from those people who are practicing law. Moreover, I do not think the questionnaire is designed to put the information obtained in proper perspective. It does not "ask" how people got to where they presently are during the last five years. For example, in addition to clerking I traveled for a year and taught for a year before obtaining my present job. I would be interested to know if other people have done things other than what they presently are doing and, if so, what those things were; and I think this information might help to explain some of the answers to the questionnaire.

Generally I found my law school education at Michigan more than adequate. I was a B student in law school but felt that I got individual attention whenever I needed it and believe that I left law school in a position to go into practice with a solid foundation in legal analysis.

VIIA No need to decrease should have wide range of choices to insure status of UM Law School as superior national institution, and I will never forget that UM Law had no black students during my first year (1965-66), and a handful of women. The number of public interest, social interest courses were small. Legal aid was an unorganized, unfunded travesty. How things have changed! I went to school with an elitist bunch of white, business oriented (e.g. Wall street) males. I feel that I was cheated but do not blame the Law School, for not being in the vanguard in changing enrollment policies and class orientation. You evidently have become good followers. Had Antioch Law ~~existed~~ existed I would have liked to have gone there.

I think that admission to the law school should be based on uniform standards for all applicants. No preferences for minorities should be used. No "compensation" for presumed disadvantages should be countenanced. No quotas or goals, 10%, etc. can be fair or impartial. The same rule should apply to all kinds of financial aid. "Disadvantaged" group students should not receive close to total support while others are told "there are no more funds available." Students to fill quotas should not be sought out and recruited when there are many more applicants than spaces in each class. My impression is that your present system violates every one of these concepts.

As an executive of a company, one of whose main businesses is legal publishing, I am in effect a businessman who could not do my job without my legal training. In retrospect, I only wish I had taken more courses which would have been pertinent to my work. Such courses would include securities, literary property, copyrights, and the like (essential if you are making publishing contracts), and business planning.

I would want the Law School to deny the services of its Placement Office to those firms and corporations that discriminate against women, not only in hiring but in opportunities within the job. For example, Cranater (sp?), Swaine and Moore in 1967 did not want a woman in its litigation department

I work in suburban office (8 lawyers) of large urban law firm (80 lawyers) our office is in a not-very-populous suburb, yet draws clientele from the metropolitan area as a whole, as well as out-state. Thus the categories provided on the questionnaire don't quite fit my situation. As a comment on curriculum: I favor a greater opportunity for law students to acquire first-hand experience prior to licensure, perhaps on the German model. Of particular value would be exposure to a judge in clerking role. However, I must confess that a reduction in course offerings of any magnitude would be undesirable, so if that is the necessary trade-off I vote for the status quo - with 2 qualifications: (1) reduce or eliminate case method teaching in 2nd and 3rd years, AND (2) increase every student's exposure to legal writing/advocacy/clinical areas.

- 1) I think law is as interesting & challenging a profession (at least in a general, non-specialized practice) as any that exists.
- 2) Here in the Kingdoms of Yale & Harvard it is heartening to find that Michigan's prestige is on a par.
- 3) Three cheers for J.J. White, Jr., & his real-life approach to legal education.

I have a great deal of respect for Michigan Law School and the standards of excellence it strive to maintain. Perhaps the "Watergate Era" reflects a need to impress upon lawyers and law students that our profession must be beyond reproach. As I recall, the ethics course offered to the Class of '68 was little more than a bad joke. This should be corrected.

In line with my comment to VII B I think law school should be a better mix of analysis and practical, everyday information than it was when I was a student. While some classes did meet this requirement, the great majority were too theoretical and not very concerned with the everyday problems that a young lawyer will face upon his admission to the bar. I believe that a U of M law student would have more difficulty starting out on his own than would a student from other law schools in this state. But do not misunderstand - I wouldn't trade my U of M. law degree for anything. I particularly find that it is highly respected by my peers in the profession and this is or can be a big advantage in certain situations.

More exposure to actual law practice during the formal education would be useful in the transition from school to practice.

Since I am now engaged in a specialized international commercial practice, where the emphasis is on careful draftsmanship and skill in foreign languages the most basic skills I need is the ability to write clear concise analytical English as well as Spanish. Whatever ability I

have in this area was acquired at Yale not the U of M. Too few lawyers research and write carefully and this training should be improved. The faculty should be composed of scholars and teachers, but I think that attorneys who have never practiced and have only "clerked" should not dominate the faculty.

I believe the case book method of teaching loses its effectiveness after the initial year. I discovered no concerted effort by the school to provide students, other than those on Law Rev. with any real understanding of requirements of legal writing, either advocacy or contractual. Such writing as was required seemed to be graded solely on information presented, not on method of presentation. Since writing is one of my daily functions, I believe regular classroom experience would have been beneficial.

My present income does not reflect what I can earn. Rather after my husband and I separated I decided to take a job in the neighborhood that was reasonably interesting but not overly time consuming. With the NLRB my hours are 9-5:30 and my daughter goes to a day care center enroute to my office from 9-6. I turned down a position which paid \$20,000 per year but was in Manhattan in order to take this job. I also felt this position had more flexibility in terms of movement around the country and into private practice at a later date. I moved several times in large part for my husband. When I married I quit a good job with a large Cleveland firm and moved to Michigan. After a year with Legal Aid in Ann Arbor, I moved to Los Angeles where my husband had a post-doctorate appointment. Two years later I moved to New York when my husband took a teaching position with C.U.N.Y. I was willing to move because academic jobs were scarce.

The revelations regarding lawyers' activities which are being disclosed in the bundle of scandals called "Watergate" leave a blotch on the entire legal profession. I realize that morality and ethics cannot be taught and would not purpose a course in how to be honest. I do believe, however, that the integrity of lawyers has to be a cut above that of the general population if our system is to survive. To the extent that law schools and law professors are able to emphasize integrity in and out of the classroom, the situation might be remedied slightly. At the same time, I would like to see Michigan stress politics as a worthy profession. Too much emphasis was placed on large firms while I was there.

In my opinion, Michigan and most other law schools provide inadequate training for a lawyer handling the discovery and trial of cases. Training in court room procedure, tactics, jury selection, preparation of motions, examination of witnesses, court argument, etc. is needed. While at Michigan Case Clubs, Campbell Competition and Trials and Appeals attempted to teach some of this. More training is needed in this area.

For the first 4 years after graduation I worked as an attorney, community organizer, and educational consultant. Two years ago I "retired" from these fields so that I could spend more time on writing, being with my daughter, personal interests. I work from 4 to 6 months a year in non-law-related fields (counselling teenagers, factory work, etc.) to provide a minimal income.

I think there should be some frank talk first year about what the various careers have to offer in terms of realistic description of the work, Money and various career paths and how they do and do not limit future flexibility. No one should ever take his first job with a corporation!

You'll feel like a prostitute.

Overall, I feel the legal education offered at Michigan Law School compares favorably with that offered anywhere and is significantly better than programs of some schools which are highly rated.

The most important thing a lawyer can learn is to be prepared on each file and organized so he doesn't spin his wheels on the tremendous volume of work usually generated. It's amazing how many lawyers never get to apply the "theory" they learn in school because they never really get around to determining the facts and hard law which delimit the merits of their case.

Income for past year is misleading: Worked six months at yearly rate of \$20,000. Then took three months vacation, and started private practice in October with little income after expenses for first three months.

~~XXXXXX~~ Re: VIIA While in law school, I felt no lack of interesting courses; nor did I feel that course offerings were superfluous. Of course, many courses offered were not of interest to me! However, the point of a legal education is not to learn particular areas of law, but rather to learn how to think as a lawyer! Hence, one might be very eclectic in choice of courses and receive a very good thinking background.

VIIA Note: This is to me a very difficult question. There are a number of courses which in light of my experience, I wish that I had taken (e.g. Labor Law, Creditors' Rights, Trial Practice). As far as I know, however, all such courses were offered but I elected others instead. Also I hesitate to suggest decreases in course offering.

I believe the University of Michigan Law School is one of the finest in the United States, and the respect accorded a degree from Michigan is a great confidence-builder - and has of course contributed to my present success as has the excellent legal education received. Also, very useful is the knowledge gained through Roy Steinheimer's informative (and entertaining) approach to the Uniform Commercial Code.

I think three years of the "case method" is too much. By the third year it begins to resemble Chinese water drop torture. A greater reliance on sources other than cases, especially in specialized courses (after the first 1 1/2 yrs.), would have made law school more interesting, would have helped in understanding and applying that specialty in practice and would have made law school more broadening & less like a "trade school"

The most significant improvement that can be made in legal education at Michigan Law School is in the area of trial practice, particularly with regard to interrogation of witnesses. Such a course should be made mandatory for one semester.

VIIA This question misses the point - each of these courses could have something to offer. The fact that some did not at Michigan has to do with its faculty and not with the particular field.

This is the sort of alumni survey you needn't have bothered sending. It is a survey designed to give back the feedback you want to hear, and to pass on to your alumni bulletin. I am distressed that the only self-evaluation you risk is the number of graduates in the more prestigious legal professions, and the income of my class. You, naturally, want to match course offerings with the specialties required for current practice. But you do not ask what we think the law school could do (other than adding course titles to its curriculum) that it is not doing now. And you do not ask what we think most rewarding or important about what we do now. That we make money and have recognizable areas of specialization seems to be the limit of a "successful" legal education. And as for your questions addressed to women, what to you intend to do with that information? If you do find out women work part time, experience marital conflicts what will you do? I suspect that some of your faculty will be in favor of reducing the time the law school "wastes" in educating women. In short, this questionnaire is intended to bolster positions the law school has taken in the past, not improve perceptions of lawyer's or society's needs. While I was in law school you demonstrated that the legal education you offered was largely out of touch with realities outside. Now, your questionnaire suggests that you are most comfortable remaining in that state. *220

The strength of my legal education at Michigan was the general background in the law which it provided, in addition to the ability to think and talk like a lawyer (not unhelpful, by the way). The weakness was the almost total lack of learning what a lawyer does each day: counsel clients, investigate facts, research the law, write opinion letters and briefs, argue motions, negotiate and prepare legal documents, take depositions, select juries, try cases, etc. I think the weakness can be remedied without affecting the strength.

VIIA Note: this question is ambiguous. Does it ask about the school's course offerings or my course selection? My answers are to the former.

Generally the law school trains and socializes students for the threshold job in the law firm- that of memo writer. It teaches us to learn from authority figures and role models. Legal education would do better: to address a greater number of lawyer functions than merely research and writing; to provide some clinical experiences, and practice-role models; and to seek as a pedagogical goal the training of persons to learn from their own experience and to integrate theory (of law, politics, sociology, psychology, economics, etc.) and practice (their working environment and experience, whatever it is) in a reflective and conscious way. The training of lawyers for responsible citizenship and freedom of career options should seek to go beyond an introduction to the rules, the roles, and the rituals of the past, and should teach how one can teach oneself

to analyse and surpass the limits and tyranny of rule, and role, and ritual.

A fundamental course in professional responsibility should be required.

In general, pleased with the caliber of education I received vis a vis others I have worked with and against. Advising as to curriculum revision is difficult since I believe I shall use or have already used bearkt evert substantive course I took at least to a limited extent. As a newly started private practitioner, more of everything is the only recommendation or perhaps, more emphasis on a clinical approach to prepare for the practical aspects of the work in the absence of senior partners.

Generally I found my Michigan education most satisfactory.

With regard to IX: from graduation until August 1, 1973 I was a Captain in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corp. If I had ~~xx~~ entered private practice in 1968, as gleaned from peers in the firm, my salary would be in the 7 or 8 range as a likely minimum.

My reluctance to answer VIIB stems from the question's form. If the question seeks the most useful courses we took, I would not exclude any course I took. Rather I like to think that all courses, regardless of subject conten, helped me to approach and deal with all sorts of problems in an analytical and productive manner. In addition, I encourage the availablility of unusual subject courses such as Civil Law, etc. to give all students the perspective of others vies of law than the usual taught in "bread-and-butter" courses.

As one section of the questionnaire relates to women only, I feel it appropriate to suggest that more counseling opportunities be available for women students in terms of their post law school activities and/or possibilities.

Due to the fact that success is often judged by ones income, I would be interested in one correlation between undergraduate academic achievement and law school results (both LSAT and actual law school grades) as wither or both predict financial success after graduation and academic success in school. As one who was ignored academically, socially, financially, etc., in favor of classmates lucky enough to make Law Review, etc. (being an admitted mediocre student at best) such an analysis might prove interesting. For my own part, I anticipate an income at \$50,000-70,000 in 1974, a level my current law review classmates are not even approaching.

1. Property course should be changed radically to emphasize real estate law today, rather than history of property law.
2. Trial practice course should be available. For moot court to take on the appellate court format, rather than trial court format, is absurd.

In general, I feel that law school training in classroom could be limited to two years. The third year should be devoted to particular practical training (e.g. advocacy, business planning in light of business or securities (a w s)). If student has no particular area of law as a goal he would continue to have option of broad range of courses.

Although I have been out of school 5 years, I spent the first 1 1/2 years in graduate school in sociology. the next year in a clerkship, and the next year and a half looking for work (although I did move away shortly after taking one job. I have had my present job 1 year. Thus, my present income does not fairly reflect being out of school 5 years.

I started practicing law with a large Cincinnati firm and feel that if I ever ~~XXX~~ practiced again I would practice alone or in a small firm. I also believe that my current income is below what I could make as a practicing lawyer, but I am willing to trade off lower current income for stock options, profit-making sharing benefits and the expectation of much larger salaries in the future.

I look back with fond memories on my years in law school and feel and have always felt as well trained as any lawyer I have come in contact with. My only real criticism as a trial lawyer is that more courses and instruction of a truly practical nature be offered to assist the prospective trial lawyer.

1. Survey seems to omit legal services and public interest law alternative
2. My wife is now in law school. What adjustments do male lawyers make in their careers for working wives and their families?

My response to III probably does not do justice to the importance of financial aid available to me at Michigan. While I rated this source as 3rd in importance (quantitatively), I probably could not have stayed in school without it.

U. of M. was great to me. I recommend it highly to all I know.

Although I am quite happy doing what I am doing (large firm practice), I feel that, while I was at law school, private practice appeared to be just about the only way in which one could put one's legal education to work. That, of course, is not true but I feel that more counseling could be done on the variety of employment opportunities which are open to a law school graduate.

Regarding law school education, freshman instructors should spend some initial time commenting on what is expected in answering law school exams. E.g., as an engineer I was particularly trained to answer or resolve an issue by deductive reasoning. I applied this in my first years exams without realizing that the importance lay in recognizing issues and the contrary legal views, not necessarily the answer.

I would suggest that courses such as criminal law, family law and administrative be taught less with the theoretical approach and more with the practical approach in mind. As they were taught at Michigan they were worthless

and they could be useful. Some estate planning should be required.

Course selection should be, of course, as broad as possible. I would urge mandatory research and legal writing courses (or emphasis thereon in other courses), since acquiring those skills when first thrust into practice is difficult and some students, if given the choice, will not opt for research and writing (as I did not). I feel Michigan prepared me well and is highly respected out here. Am looking forward to receiving results of your survey.

Mandatory Legal Aid work or some other practical application of course work. I felt rather "ill-equipped" upon my graduation. In retrospect I feel that greater emphasis should be placed upon the "practical" ~~as~~ as opposed to the "theory" of law. I would even support a return to the legal clerkship concept upon one's graduation from law school.

Law School did not prepare me for the everyday practice of law in a small law firm. Broad, important trend setting developments were covered far too much; while the realistic, client oriented, time juggling, inevitable compromise nature of practicing law was almost totally ignored.

I will always consider my opportunity to pursue a legal education with the Class of 1968 at Michigan as a distinct honor in light of the faculty and classmates with whom I was privileged to associate. In particular, I found the classes of Prof. Kamisar, Prof. Estep, and Fr. Bayne (a visiting faculty member) to be excellent not only from the standpoint of content, but in a thought-provoking aspect as well. I also sincerely appreciate the time spent with me by Prof. Pierce in an advisory capacity, although he was not the formal faculty advisor to whom I was assigned. I further appreciate the financial assistance provided me by the Law School, which permitted me to enroll at Michigan and complete my legal education. This help will never be forgotten, and I will attempt to make my financial contributions more significant as my practice develops so that others might have the same opportunity in the future.

Generally speaking, the courses from which I derived the most benefit (and which proved to be of use following law school) were those taught by professors who had actually practiced in their fields. Those who had none but academic experience devoted themselves to highly theoretical "fringe areas" which were of little or no relevance following law school.

I practice in a "law collective." We handle mostly criminal defense, civil rights cases, prison reform, sex and race discrimination, Title VII, and political cases. Since we are structured differently than most traditional law offices, the answers to several of the questions in this survey are not really applicable, and may show the results somewhat (030)

Probably answered IX out of vanity- This really should not be the Law School's concern. My worst experience at law school was the introductory or "welcoming" lecture at which the speaker addressed us on the results of one of these surveys. It sounded like a "What kind of Man reads playboy" Ad. (In 10 years we would be making x dollars and have color TV's etc.

I feel that 2nd and 3rd year courses place undue emphasis on the "case method". More educational were "problem" projects within the area of study (e.g. income tax) in a course. Obviously these require more "correcting time" than a law professor might be willing to give. Perhaps special graduate students could be designated to review them under the supervision of the teacher.

I can appreciate your desire to obtain a statistical profile of past graduates, and in this age of legislative accountability it is exceedingly important to relate educational inputs with job achievements---"educational outputs." BUT, as your form amply demonstrates, legal training has been and will continue to be a firm foundation for many occupations. I would point particularly to public service, which I can speak of with some degree of expertise. I would suggest that it would be of equal value to attempt to evaluate the total contribution of the educational program and process to many occupations, and to an attorney's total life experience and community responsibilities as a professional with special insight into public affairs.

After graduation from law school in 1968, I served three years as an officer in the Navy (non-JAG, but I did perform various legal services for my command.). From September, 1971, to February, 1974, I was an associate in the San Francisco firm of Orrick, Herrington, Rowley & Sutcliffe. I specialized in litigation - and it was slowly driving me nuts. In February I took my present position - special assistant to the Dean of Yale Law School. I look upon as an approximately 2 year experiment to see if I like the only other job I've really considered - educational administration.
